

NEWS FROM ED MARKEY

United States Congress

Massachusetts Seventh District

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MARKEY DEMANDS DETAILS ON MASSPORT SECURITY ENHANCEMENTS IN AFTERMATH OF “I-TEAM” INVESTIGATION *100% Contractor Vehicle Inspection, Driver Identity Verification Needed at Airports Nationwide*

WASHINGTON, D.C.: Rep. Edward Markey (D-MA), a senior member of the Select Committee on Homeland Security, today sent a letter to Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge to urge the Department to make its approval of airports’ security plans contingent upon airport operator compliance with 100% vehicle inspection and operator identity verification for all airport contractors prior to their entry into secure areas of airports.

“No more security loopholes that you can drive a truck through,” Rep. Markey said.

“The recent I-Team investigation at Logan uncovered a disturbing security weakness. According to the report, commercial vehicles driven by contractors hired by Massport that were entering the airport perimeter to perform a repaving project were not being physically inspected. Unbelievably, this procedure complied with federal rules. While Massport announced a modification to its security policies in response to the investigation, I am concerned that Massport’s recent security enhancements may be insufficient. Moreover, today I called on the Department of Homeland Security to require physical vehicle inspection and driver identity verification for all commercial vehicles operated by contractors that penetrate secure areas of airports nationwide. Failure to perform these security measures is a glaring security loophole that should be immediately closed across the country – not merely at a handful of airports,” Rep. Markey said.

Rep. Markey’s letter requested that the Department of Homeland Security respond to the following questions:

1. Has the Department been informed of the specific security “enhancements” envisioned by Massport?
2. Is it Secretary Ridge’s understanding that *every* commercial vehicle operated by *every* Massport contractor with access to secure areas of the airport will be subjected to physical checks – i.e., inspection of the vehicle and positive verification of the driver’s identity – or will only certain vehicles and drivers on particular construction projects submit to Massport’s enhanced security measures?
3. Will the enhancements be enshrined in Massport’s security plan on file with the Department? Will an amended plan be produced by Massport and approved by the Department that reflects the modifications? If not, why not?

“Today I urged the Department of Homeland Security to direct Massport to develop and submit an amended security plan that codifies Massport’s new vehicle inspection policy and incorporates it into Logan’s overall security plan. I have requested a copy of Massport’s plan and called on the Department to make such inspection policies standard operating procedure for commercial airports around the country. While Massport’s revised policy is a step in the right direction, we must tighten such security procedures at airports nationwide,” Rep. Markey concluded.

The text of the letter can be viewed at <http://www.house.gov/markey>

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